

From Her Arms to His Making Women's History Come Alive

Since the creation of the National Park Service in 1916, education has played an important preservation and political role in the management of national park sites. Since 1991, the NPS has received funding from the National Park Foundation for the Parks as Classrooms® program which focuses on a specific theme or moment in time to make it come alive. The funding has developed curriculum, teacher workshops, traveling kits, and A/V programs. Parks as Classrooms programs are based on established curriculum with specific learning goals and a "hands-on" experience. Women in History programs include the following:

- At **Boston National Historic Park**, sites focus on the events and ideas associated with the American Revolution. "Patriots in Town: The Reveres" provides fifth graders with insight into the roles of Mrs. Rachel Revere and her children during the American Revolution. Students learn how the family provided vital assistance to Paul Revere after his famous midnight ride.
- At **Adams National Historic Site**, the "Patriots in the Countryside: The Adams" program has students look at the life of the Adams family during the Revolution. Students learn how Abigail Adams and her children watched refugees fleeing British-occupied Boston to the countryside and how they helped many refugee families survive.
- **Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site** (PA) and at **Lowell National Historic Park** (MA) depict early industrial America. At Hopewell, "They Were What They Ate" provides a unique perspective on the women who cared for workers at a rural 19th-century ironmaster's plantation, using cooking demonstrations to present the life and dignity of the ordinary women of Hopewell Furnace. Lowell offers several programs, including "Yankees and Immigrants" which emphasize the world of Lowell's workers: the early Yankee "mill girls," agents, and the successive groups of immigrants. "Bale to Bolt" also examines

the story of women mill workers and the types of technology they used. "The World of Barilla Taylor," a primary-source-based curriculum-kit, introduces students in grades 8-12 to a teenage woman who left a Maine farm in 1843 to work in the Lowell textile mills.

- Parks such as **Kennesaw Mountain National Historic Park** (GA) have curriculum-based programs presenting the roles of women during the Civil War. At **Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial** (VA), a high school program examines the Lee women, their values, choices, and consequences during the Civil War. Students do primary research on a particular person and then write a short play which is presented in period clothing on the front portico of the Arlington House. The **Clara Barton National Historic Site** (MD) has three curriculum-based programs that deal with the life and times of Clara Barton.
- Working women during World War II are represented in at least three parks. **Springfield Armory National Historic Site** (MA) has a Teaching Guide and audio cassette program, "From Her Arms to His," which depicts women ordnance workers during World War II. Women shipyard workers are featured in the "Rosie the Riveter" program for fifth graders at Boston NHP's **Charlestown Navy Yard**. **Steamtown National Historic Site** (PA) celebrates the legacy of women railroaders through an educational first person living history program called "Rosie the Railroader." The program for grades 4-12 shows students the important roles women played on the railroads and other industrial jobs during World War II.

The Parks as Classrooms® program can help both students and educators move beyond textbooks and classrooms to make learning a positive and fun experience.

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